



# NEWS RELEASE

## HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF POLICE OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

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### **Work group to consider use of drone technology in Howard County**

The Howard County Police Department is forming a new work group to evaluate the possible use of unmanned aircraft systems, commonly known as drones, to support and enhance police operations in Howard County.

The work group will examine the technology, cost, usefulness, transparency, training and privacy issues in launching a program.

“Law enforcement agencies across the nation have adopted aerial drones for a variety of uses, like locating lost children and seniors, providing real-time information about evolving situations, mapping and reaching remote crime scenes, and aiding search-and-rescue operations,” said Police Chief Lisa Myers. “The work group will explore this technology to assess its potential value as a law enforcement tool here in Howard County.”

The group, which will hold its first meeting this month, will make recommendations about vendors, equipment, training, policy development and operational uses for the technology. A timetable for a final report has not yet been determined.

“Howard County continues to be a leader in using technology to offer the best possible services to our community,” said County Executive Calvin Ball. “We are always looking for new ways to improve safety and do things more efficiently. The research of this new work group will help us explore how to offer Howard County a viable, cost-effective alternative to conventional aircraft to meet our current and future needs.”

The work group is comprised of approximately 20 members, representing police operations and administration, community partners, union leaders, risk management, policy development, training, public information and the HCPD Citizens’ Advisory Council. The group also includes representatives from the Howard County State’s Attorney’s Office, Sheriff’s Office, Office of Law and Police Foundation.

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